

On Top Of The News Email: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) website: [www.arubatoday.com](http://www.arubatoday.com) Tel: +297 582-7800 Monday, June 29, 2015

## WILD WEEKEND



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International recording artist Pitbull is surrounded by dancers while performing one of his many hit songs at Aruba's Harbor Square Arena, Saturday, July 27, 2015.  
(Aruba Today Photo)  
Pages 16 & 17

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## 2nd escaped US murderer is shot, captured after other killed



Corrections officers wave to passing motorists who cheered them after the second of two escaped prisoners was apprehended on Sunday, June 28, 2015, in Constable, N.Y. David Sweat, the second of two convicted murderers who escaped from prison in New York, was shot and captured near the Canadian border on Sunday, a sheriff said. (AP Photo/Mike Groll)

**MICHAEL BALSAMO**  
Associated Press

**MALONE, New York (AP)** — The second of two convicted murderers who staged a brazen escape three weeks ago from a maximum-security prison in northern New York state

was shot and captured near the Canadian border on Sunday, two days after his fellow inmate was killed in a confrontation with law enforcement, authorities said. "The nightmare is finally over," Gov. Andrew Cu-

mo declared at a news conference. A state police sergeant shot David Sweat in the town of Constable, just south of the Canadian border and 30 miles (50 miles) northwest of the prison, after spotting him walking

along a road and recognizing him, Cuomo said. Sweat fled and Sgt. Jay Cook opened fire when he couldn't catch him on foot and noticed the fugitive heading toward a line of trees, state police said. Sweat was struck twice in the torso and taken to a hospital in stable condition, Cuomo said. His capture came two days after his escape partner, Richard Matt, was shot and killed by authorities. The men had been on the loose since June 6, when they cut their way out of a maximum-security prison using power tools. State police Superintendent Joseph D'Amico said the men may have used pepper to mask their trail; he said Sweat's DNA was recovered from pepper shakers found at one camp where the fugitives may have spent time. "We did have difficulty tracking so, you know, it was fairly effective in that respect," D'Amico said. Cuomo said many questions remained un-

answered. "We have already started a full investigation," he said. "But today ends with good news. These were dangerous, dangerous men." Matt and Sweat used power tools to saw through a steel cell wall and several steel steam pipes, bashed a hole through a brick wall, squirmed through pipes and emerged from a manhole outside the Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora. Sweat was serving a sentence of life without parole in the killing of a sheriff's deputy in Broome County in 2002. Matt was serving 25 years to life for the killing and dismembering of his former boss. They were added to the U.S. Marshals Service's 15 Most Wanted fugitives list two weeks after getting away. The search for the escaped killers was initially concentrated around the prison and a rural community where search dogs had caught the scent of both men. □





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*\*Katie Yoon*

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## SpaceX rocket destroyed on way to space station, cargo lost

**MARCIA DUNN**  
**AP Aerospace Writer**

An unmanned SpaceX rocket carrying supplies to the International Space Station broke apart Sunday shortly after liftoff. It was a severe blow to NASA, the third cargo mission to fail in eight months.

The accident happened about 2½ minutes into the flight from Cape Canaveral, Florida. A billowing white cloud emerged in the sky, growing bigger and bigger, then fiery plumes shot out. Pieces of the rocket could be seen falling into the Atlantic Ocean like a fireworks display gone wrong.

More than 5,200 pounds (2,360 kilograms) of space station cargo were on board, including the first docking port designed for



**A crowd at Cocoa Beach, Fla. watches the launch of the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket and Dragon spacecraft, which broke apart shortly after liftoff from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Sunday, June 28, 2015.**

(Malcom Denmark/Florida Today via AP)

future commercial crew capsules, a new spacesuit and a water filtration system.

NASA officials said they have enough supplies for the three-person crew on board the station to last

until October and still plan to send three more crewmembers up in a late July launch. Normally, NASA likes to have a six-month cushion of food and water, but it is now down to four months.

"We're good from a food and water standpoint," NASA's top spaceflight official, William Gerstenmaier said at a press conference. This puts added pressure on another resupply launch scheduled for Friday by Russia, its first attempt since losing a supply capsule in April.

SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket shattered while traveling at 2,900 mph (4,670 kph), about 27 miles (43 kilometers) up. Everything seemed to be going well until the rocket went supersonic.

"We appear to have had a launch vehicle failure," announced NASA commentator George Diller. Data stopped flowing from the Falcon 9 rocket around 2 minutes and 19 seconds after liftoff, he said.

SpaceX founder and chief executive Elon Musk later said that the pressure got too high in the liquid-oxygen tank of the rocket's upper stage.

"That's all we can say with confidence right now," Musk said via Twitter.

The private company is in charge of the accident investigation, with oversight from the Federal Aviation Administration, which licensed the flight.

The Dragon capsule, which is designed to eventually carry people, still sent signals to the ground after the rocket broke apart, said SpaceX President Gwynne Shotwell. Had astronauts been on board, a still-being tested abort system, would have whisked them away to safety in such a mishap, she said. □

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## Christie to embrace underdog role as he launches 2016 bid



New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie speaks at the Northeast Republican Leadership Conference in Philadelphia.

(AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

JILL COLVIN

Associated Press

TRENTON, New Jersey

(AP) — When New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie enters the race for president this week, he'll do so as an underdog in the crowded Republican field. The launch of the Republican governor's White House campaign is the culmination of years of groundwork that began even before his landslide re-election to a second term as governor in 2013, but one nearly felled by scandal and a descent from his standing as one of the nation's most popular state leaders to a politician whose approval ratings have reached record lows at home. It's a reality Christie and his supporters are ready to embrace, not that they have a choice.

"Clearly, he's got some uphill work to be done," said Ken Langone, a co-founder of the Home Depot retail chain and one of Christie's most vocal supporters. "But I think it can be done."

In recent months, Christie's team has tried to re-establish him as a credible candidate offering lots of policy prescriptions. His aides and supporters talk about his charismatic personality, quick wit and plain-spoken manner, which they believe can win over voters at campaign events and on debate stages.

With so many candidates in the field — Christie will be the 14th major Republican to enter the race, with at least two more likely before summer's end — and no clear front-runner, they say they can forge a path

to the Republican nomination.

Christie will kick off his campaign at the gymnasium of his old high school in Livingston, New Jersey. His remarks will reintroduce him to a national audience and draw heavily on his biography. Christie often emphasizes his working-class roots, telling the story of his father, who paid his way through college while working at an ice cream plant. It's an implicit contrast with former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, whose family name and flush campaign accounts Christie will now be up against.

With a new slogan — "Telling it like it is" — Christie will also play up his brash persona, presenting himself as someone unafraid to take on unpopular issues such as

overhauling Social Security and Medicare.

The message aims to move Christie past the moments that have defined him since 2012, when Langone was among those pleading with him to get into the presidential race. They include the actions of three former aides, charged with creating politically motivated traffic jams to retaliate against a Democratic mayor who passed on endorsing Christie's re-election.

While Christie's turn as head of the Republican Governors Association was widely viewed as a success in the 2014 midterm elections, and the traffic scandal has never touched him personally, he has so far failed to build much momentum in polling of the Republican presidential field. □

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## Charleston church pastor remembered after VP Biden visit



U.S. Vice President Joe Biden, center, with son and daughter-in-law Hunter and Kathleen Biden, to his right, sing "We Shall Overcome" while joining hands with Emanuel AME Church members Sunday, June 28, 2015 in Charleston, S.C. (Melissa Boughton/The Post and Courier via AP)

**JOHN MORITZ** **lina (AP)** — Vice President Joe Biden worshipped and spoke at the Sunday ser-

vice of the historic African-American church where nine people were gunned down during Bible study earlier this month just hours before a funeral was held for another of the shooting victims.

The vice president's surprise appearance came on the second Sunday the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church held regular services following the June 17 shooting. Police contend the attack was racially motivated and have charged a 21-year-old white man.

Biden said he'd visited Emanuel before and knew the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, the pastor of the church who was among those killed.

"We came back because my family and I wanted to show solidarity with the families and with the church," said Biden, wearing a purple tie, a traditional color of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Biden, a Catholic, showed the congregation the rosa-

ry beads he wore around his wrist and spoke about the feeling of loss within his own life.

The vice president's son, Beau, died late last month of brain cancer. Beau Biden narrowly avoided death as a young boy in a 1972 car crash that killed Joe Biden's first wife and his daughter.

"The reason I came was to draw strength from all of you," Biden said. "I wish I could say something that would ease the pain."

Biden received a standing ovation during the 2 1/2-hour service after reading a selection of scripture. He later joined the congregation in holding hands and singing, "We Shall Overcome." The Sunday morning service came hours before the church held a funeral for shooting victim DePayne Middleton-Doctor. The 49-year-old pastor and mother of four decided in January to return to her childhood roots in the AME faith and attend Emanuel after years attending a Baptist church.

The crowd of family and friends was so large at the funeral that many watched the service on closed-circuit TV from the church's first floor, where the shooting took place. The mood in the overflow space was enthusiastic and many stood to clap, sing and even shake a tambourine along with the music being played at the service one floor above.

The church, founded by freed slaves in the early 19th Century, was filled during the earlier service with worshippers of different races. Some in the congregation wore minister's robes and had come to worship from nearby churches. Four men wore traditional turbans of the Sikh faith. Groups from Georgia and New York presented donations to the church.

The church slayings have been blamed on Dylann Storm Roof, who was shown in photos posing with a Confederate battle flag and burning the U.S. flag. □

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### North Carolina:

## Prison worker accused of helping man escape

**POLKTON, N.C. (AP)** — A kitchen worker at a North Carolina prison was charged Sunday with helping a convicted murderer escape as the search for the inmate continued.

Kendra Lynette Miller, 33, faces multiple charges connected to Saturday's escape by Kristopher McNeil, the state Department of Public Safety said in a statement. McNeil, 29, of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, was serving a sentence for second-degree murder.

Prison officials say McNeil is believed to have scaled

the fence at the minimum-security unit of Brown Creek Correctional Institution, about 45 miles east of Charlotte. He was convicted in 2009 and was scheduled for release in 2018.

Polkton police charged Miller with harboring a fugitive and aiding and abetting a fugitive. She's also charged with having sex with an inmate and providing a cellphone. An Anson County Jail official said she did not have a lawyer. Her bond was set at \$500,000, prison officials said.

Miller and McNeil are believed to have worked in

the prison kitchen together, state prisons spokeswoman Pamela Walker said. Miller began working at the prison in December. McNeil agreed to plead guilty to second-degree murder and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon after initially being charged with first-degree murder, the Winston-Salem Journal reported in 2009. He killed Lancelot "Bobby" Muir, 44, who was found shot to death along a creek near his girlfriend's home. Muir was awaiting trial on cocaine trafficking charges at the time of his death. □





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## Supreme Court ruling makes pride parades historic, jubilant

JANIE HAR

Associated Press

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** — Hundreds of thousands of people on Sunday packed gay pride events across the U.S. from New York to San Francisco, with overall attendance expected in the millions for what amounted to a celebration of a freshly endorsed right to marry.

In San Francisco, a parade that at times resembled a rainbow-colored dance party snaked through downtown. Cheerleaders, dancers and proud families of lesbians and gays swooped up Market Street as spectators 10 to 15 people lined both sides of the street.

There were "Hooray for Gay" and "Love Won" signs. There were rainbow flags and knee socks, umbrellas and tutus.

SF Pride Board President Gary Virginia said the exuberance was amplified given Friday's U.S. Supreme Court ruling that same-sex couples can wed in all 50 states. Still, he said more needs to be done in housing and job discrimination in the United States and for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people around the world.

"Today, we celebrate," Virginia said. "Tomorrow, we get back to work."

Hundreds of thousands of people packed gay pride events from Chicago to New York City, Seattle to San Francisco, with overall attendance for events expected in the millions. In New York City, organizers expected about 22,000 people to march while in San Francisco, organizers put the number at 26,000. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo used newly granted powers to officiate at the wedding ceremony of

a same-sex couple in Manhattan. It was held in front of the Stonewall Inn, where in 1969 gay bar patrons stood up to a police raid, launching the modern gay rights movement.

State law did not allow Cuomo to officiate at wedding ceremonies until last week. The authority to do so was granted as part of a slew of legislation passed days ago.

Nikita Lowery, a 28-year-old resident of Chicago, said she decided to attend that city's parade for the first time this year. "I feel like it's a true celebration now," she said.

At gay pride parades in Paris and other cities outside the U.S. on Saturday, the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling was hailed by many as a watershed.

"Soon in all countries we will be able to marry," said Celine Schlewitz, a 25-year-old nurse taking part in the Paris parade. "Finally a freedom for everyone."

Street celebrations were boosted Saturday in Dublin, where Ireland mounted the biggest gay rights parade in the country's history.

More than 60,000 people paraded at the culmination of a weeklong gay rights festival in the Irish capital. While the mood was already high following Ireland's referendum last month to legalize gay marriage — becoming the first nation to do so by popular vote — many marchers said the Supreme Court ruling provided a bonus reason to celebrate.

In Turkey, police used water cannons to clear a rally Sunday in Istanbul. Between 100 and 200 marchers were chased away from Taksim Square after a police vehicle fired several jets of water to disperse



Rafael Gondim, left, kisses his five year-old son Gabriel King, as his husband Courtney King holds the child while the trio marches down Fifth Avenue during the Heritage Pride March in New York, Sunday, June 28, 2015. Gay pride parades across the U.S. saw tremendous turnout following the landmark Supreme Court ruling that said gay couples can marry anywhere in the country.

(AP Photo/Kathy Willens)

the crowd. It wasn't clear why the police intervened in the peaceful rally. The crowd regrouped a few

blocks away.

In San Francisco, police say a bystander was shot at a gay pride event at the

city's civic center Saturday when several men got into an argument unrelated to the celebration. □



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## Greece imposes capital controls, banks to remain shut

**ELENA BECATOROS  
DEMETRIS NELLAS**  
Associated Press

**ATHENS, Greece (AP)** — Greece's five-year financial crisis took its most dramatic turn to date Sunday, with the prime minister announcing Greek banks would remain shut indefinitely and restrictions would be imposed on cash withdrawals.

The decision came on the recommendation of the Bank of Greece, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said during a televised address to the nation. He didn't immediately say what types of capital controls would be imposed.

The developments have thrown into question Greece's financial future and continued member-

ship in the 19-nation shared euro currency — and even the European Union.

For the past two days, Greeks have been rushing to ATMs to withdraw money across the country following Tsipras' sudden weekend decision to call a referendum on creditor proposals for Greek reforms in return for vital bailout funds.

The government is urging Greeks to vote against the proposals, arguing that they are humiliating and that they would prolong the country's financial woes.

Spooked by rumors concerning impending fuel shortages, drivers flooded gas stations across Greece, prompting the country's largest refiner, Hellenic Pe-



People stand in a queue to use ATMs of a bank in central Athens, Sunday, June 28, 2015. Greece's five-year financial crisis took its most dramatic turn to date Sunday, with the prime minister announcing Greek banks would remain shut indefinitely and restrictions would be imposed on cash withdrawals.

(AP Photo/Thanassis Stavrakis)

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troleum, to issue a statement reassuring there are sufficient reserves of gasoline to last several months. The rush to gas stations may have been prompted less by worries about shortages than rumors that only withdrawals of up to 60 euros (\$66) per day from ATMs will be allowed and that use of credit or debit cards will not be permitted.

The referendum decision, which was ratified by parliament after a marathon 13-hour session that ended in the early hours of Sunday, shocked and angered Greece's European partners. The country's negotiations with its European creditors have been suspended, with both sides accusing each other of being responsible.

Earlier Sunday, the European Central Bank decided not to increase the amount of emergency liquidity the lenders can access from the central bank — meaning they have no way to

replenish fast diminishing deposits.

"It is now more than clear that this decision has no other aim than to blackmail the will of the Greek people and prevent the smooth democratic process of the referendum," Tsipras said.

"They will not succeed. These moves will have the exact opposite effect. They will make the Greek people more determined in their choice to reject the unacceptable ... proposals and ultimatums of the creditors," he said.

The referendum is set for next Sunday. But Greece's current bailout expires on Tuesday, and the 7.2 billion euros (\$8 billion) remaining in it will no longer be available to Greece after that date.

Without those funds, Greece is unlikely to be able to pay a 1.6 billion-euro (\$1.79 billion) International Monetary Fund debt repayment due the same

day.

Tsipras said he had renewed a request for the bailout to be extended by a few days to allow for the referendum — a request which was rebuffed during the weekend by Greece's European creditors.

Tsipras gave no details of how long banks will remain closed or what restrictions will be placed on transactions. Two financial sector officials said the banks would likely remain shut for several days, and the Athens Stock Exchange would also not open on Monday. Some European officials called for renewed efforts by both sides.

"We don't know — none of us — the consequences of an exit from the eurozone, either on the political or economic front. We must do everything so that Greece stays in the eurozone," French Prime Minister Manuel Valls told France's i-Tele TV earlier Sunday. □



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## Tunisia launches nationwide manhunt for attack accomplices

**ELAINE GANLEY**  
**Associated Press**

**SOUSSE, Tunisia (AP)** — The student who massacred holidaymakers on a Tunisian beach and at a swank resort hotel acted alone during the attack but had accomplices who supported him beforehand, an Interior Ministry official said Sunday.

Police were searching nationwide for more suspects after the slaughter of at least 38 people in Sousse on Friday, in Tunisia's deadliest ever such attack. The attacker's father and three roommates were detained and being questioned in the capital, Tunis, Interior Ministry spokesman Mohamed Ali Aroui told The Associated Press.

The attacker has been identified as Seifeddine Rezgui, a 24-year-old graduate of Tunisia's Kairouan University where he had been living with the other students. The attack was claimed by the radical Islamic State group. "We are sure that others helped, but did not participate," Aroui said. "They participated indirectly." Investigators believe the suspected accomplices provided the Kalashnikov assault rifle to Rezgui and helped him get to the scene, Aroui said.

Authorities have yet to suggest a motive for the carnage. A security official close to the investigation said the student frequented an "unofficial" mosque

father just before his assault, the official said on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak publicly.

Friday's attack on the

democracy.

The bloodshed shocked European nations across the Mediterranean worried for the safety of their citizens who populate Tun-

officers and staff — one of the force's largest counter-terrorism deployments in recent years — in response to the attack.

At least 15 Britons were among the 38 killed, the most serious attack on the British since 52 people were killed in attacks targeting London's transport network in July 2005. Three Irish nationals were also among the dead. Britain's Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said it was highly likely that "a significant number" of the victims yet to be identified would be British.

Britain has deployed senior detectives and forensic teams to Tunisia.

Ballistic tests showed the bullets came from a single Kalashnikov, Aroui said, adding that the attacker was equipped with four ammunition chargers — all found by investigators. Aroui said each might hold 30 rounds.

Shortly after Friday's shooting spree, Aroui had initially said that two people were involved in the attack before backtracking. To some, the long duration of the assault — reportedly lasting nearly 30 minutes — and the high casualty count might indicate that more than one gunman was involved. □



**Tourists and residents, some displaying a Tunisian flag, walk on the beach to the scene of the attack in Sousse, Tunisia, Sunday, June 28, 2015. The Friday attack on tourists at a beach is expected to be a huge blow to Tunisia's tourism sector, which made up nearly 15 percent of the country's gross domestic product in 2014.**  
(AP Photo/Abdeljalil Bounhar)

in the Tunisian holy city of Kairouan for the past two years.

The official said a swimmer had found the attacker's cellphone in the Mediterranean. The phone showed the attacker spoke with his

Imperial Marhaba Hotel shook this North African nation that thrives on tourism and has struggled since its 2011 revolution to be the one Arab Spring country that succeeds in transitioning from authoritarianism to

sian beaches — and about what it may mean for their own countries in an age of globalized terrorism.

British counterterrorism police official Mark Rowley said Sunday that Britain has mobilized more than 600



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## French police escort suspect in beheading to his home



The suspect in the beheading of a businessman, Yassine Salhi, a towel over his head to mask his face, is escorted by police officers as they leave his home in Saint-Priest, outside the city of Lyon, central France, Sunday, June 28, 2015.

(AP Photo/Laurent Cipriani)

ALEX TURNBULL  
JAMEY KEATEN

Associated Press  
SAINT-PRIEST, France (AP)

— Police investigators wearing masks escorted a man accused of a beheading to his home in southeastern France on Sunday, searching for a possible international link to the killing after he sent a photo of the victim to a contact in Syria, a security official said.

Yassine Salhi, 35, was handcuffed and wearing jeans, a knee-length djellabah robe and a loose towel over his head when judicial police led him into his residence in the town of Saint-Priest, outside the city of Lyon.

The official told The Associated Press that police were searching for Salhi's passport, to determine if he had traveled abroad before Friday's attack that authorities are calling France's first deadly terror attack since a killing spree in the Paris area in January. Salhi, a truck deliveryman

and father of three with a history of ties to Islamic extremists, admitted earlier to the killing of the manager of the transportation company that had employed Salhi since March, officials said.

The official also said Salhi had sent a macabre "selfie" photo of himself and the victim to a man identified only as Younes, who allegedly has been in war-torn Syria since last year. Investigators have found no links to any international terror group.

The suspect and police spent a little over an hour in Salhi's home. It wasn't immediately clear if police found what they were looking for. Sirens blaring, the police returned him to a Lyon police station where he was initially questioned. Another security official said that authorities were looking into initial claims by Salhi to police that he

had recently disputed with his wife and employer, was suicidal, and had wanted to make a media splash with a killing that had the markings of terrorism.

The severed head appeared to imitate the practice of the radical Islamic State group of beheading prisoners and displaying their heads publicly. The killing came after the militants urged attacks during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. French authorities say Salhi had links to radical Salafists in the past. The suspect allegedly crashed a truck into a U.S.-owned chemical warehouse on Friday, setting off an explosion, and hung his employer's head on the factory's gate. He was quickly arrested afterward. Officials had previously said he sent the selfie of himself and the victim to a Canadian mobile phone number. □

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## Pro-European candidate leads in Moldova vote

**CORNELIU RUSNAC**

Associated Press

**CHISINAU, Moldova (AP)**

— Near-final results gave a pro-European Union candidate a comfortable lead in the runoff vote for mayor of Moldova's biggest city Sunday, in an election seen as a test of whether the former Soviet republic moves closer to the EU or to neighboring Russia.

With over 98 percent of the votes counted, incumbent Dorin Chirtoaca had 53.14 percent of the vote with pro-Russian challenger Zinaida Greceanai trailing at 46.86 percent.

Moldova, which declared

independence in 1991 after the Soviet Union broke up, is located between Romania and Ukraine. Last year, it signed an association agreement with the 28-nation EU, angering Russia, which then banned some of its fruits and vegetables. That hurt the largely agricultural nation, one of Europe's poorest.

Fireworks exploded in the capital just before midnight when it looked like Chirtoaca would win another four-year mandate. He has been mayor since 2007 of this city of 1 million. Earlier, the 38-year-old Chirtoaca said he was

confident of victory because votes from the suburbs which are traditionally pro-European had not come in yet.

Greceanai, 59, is a former prime minister of the Communist Party. Greceanai thanked her voters and said she would continue to fight for the interests of Chisinau residents, without outright acknowledging defeat in the runoff. Turnout was 47.5 percent when polls closed at 9 p.m. (1800 GMT), slightly lower than in the first round on June 14. However, turnout in the capital was 48.8 percent, higher than in the first round. □





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## UN envoy urges restraint amid standoff in Colombia

J. GOODMAN  
 Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)

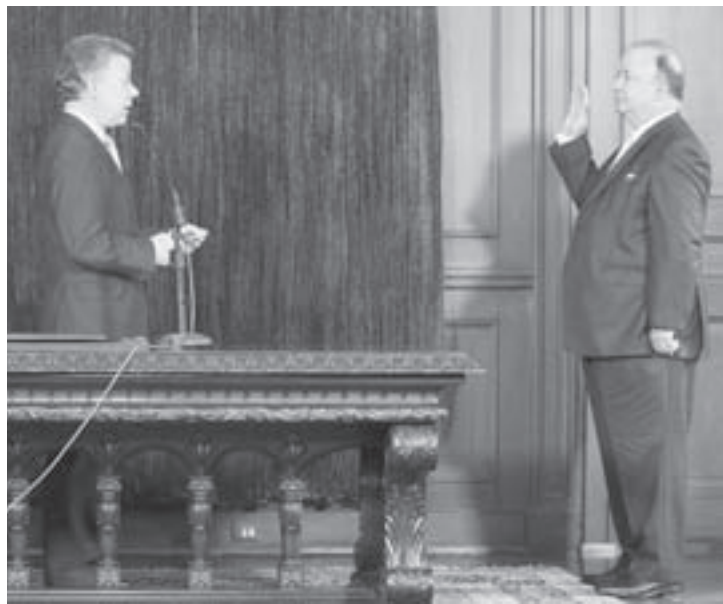
— A United Nations envoy is urging restraint amid a tense standoff on the front lines of Colombia's conflict between security forces and farmers who expelled police allegedly under pressure from leftist rebels. Hundreds of riot police were deployed Saturday to the rural hamlet of El Mango in southwestern Colombia four days after a mob burned down a makeshift barracks and demanded that a small police contingent leave.

Authorities blamed the expulsion on civilians coerced by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

Both sides in Colombia's long-running conflict have been stepping up attacks in recent weeks, jeopardizing the future of peace talks. Human rights groups warn that more confrontations putting civilian lives at risk are around the corner after the rebel group known as the FARC lifted a unilateral cease-fire last month.

Todd Howland, representative in Colombia for the U.N. high commissioner for human rights, said residents are being unfairly stigmatized as FARC supporters.

"People feel they receive very little benefit because police in these conflict zones don't actually do police work," Howland



Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos, left, swears in Luis Carlos Villegas as his new defense minister at the presidential palace in Bogotá, Colombia. A United Nations envoy is urging restraint amid a tense standoff on the front lines of Colombia's conflict between security forces and farmers who expelled police allegedly under pressure from leftist rebels.

(AP Photo/Fernando Vergara)

told The Associated Press. "They're sandbagged in. It's like having a military base in town."

People in the town said the police, bending to the popular outrage, relocated to a bluff overlooking El Mango as thousands of people from the town and neighboring villages marched peacefully to demand that they not be made human shields if fighting breaks out. But Gen. Rodolfo Palomino, the head of Colombia's police, insisted Sunday that security forces have returned for good, saying in a statement it was the government's constitutional obligation "to assure and maintain the peace, order and territorial integrity." □

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## Venezuela's ruling party taps celeb candidates to woo youth



Government supporters get revved up during a campaign rally for the ruling socialist party in Caracas, Venezuela.  
(AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

**FABIOLA SANCHEZ**  
Associated Press

**CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)**

— With only 26 years of age, Jesus Casanova has already earned a degree

in journalism, is the owner of a South American swimming championship and last year was crowned Mister Venezuela in this beauty-obsessed nation. Now he wants to add a new title to his achievements: congressman.

Along with a cadre of athletes, hip-hop artists and TV personalities, Casanova is one of several minor celebrities, most of them political novices, who competed Sunday in primaries to select candidates for the ruling socialist party for December's legislative elections.

Analysts say President

Nicolas Maduro is counting on the fresh faces to court young, uncommitted voters at a time when support for his socialist administration is being eroded by widespread shortages and triple-digit inflation. His United Socialist Party, or PSUV, has mandated that half of its candidates be under the age of 30 to match the demographics of Venezuela's 19 million voters.

"The polls show it. People want to see young, new faces, new projects and fresh ideas," Casanova told The Associated Press as he wrapped up campaigning in the western city of Barinas.

More than 1,100 candidates competed in Sunday's vote, from which 110 of the candidates for the National Assembly's 167 seats will emerge. The rest will be proposed by party leaders.

While there's little politically distinguishing those running, turnout will be a key test of the PSUV's electoral machinery.

With the opposition heavily favored to take control of congress for the first time since the late President Hugo Chavez was elected 16 years ago, Maduro's government is counting on its superior ground game to rally its base among the poor, especially in far-flung rural areas where the economic crisis is more severe but the opposition has little reach.

Pro-government candidates are also helped by near-complete socialist control of state institutions, a still-strong loyalty to the legacy of Chavez and the opposition's scant access to television and radio.

In the last parliamentary election, in 2010, the ruling party failed to secure a majority of the popu-

lar vote but still retained nearly 60 percent control of the legislature thanks to Venezuela's complicated electoral math.

The opposition is also courting the youth vote; a third of candidates in its primaries last month were under the age of 40. If it takes control of congress, it's likely to set the stage for a referendum to cut short Maduro's presidency before his term ends in 2019.

Casanova goes by the nickname "The Triton of Sabaneta," a reference to his prowess in the pool and roots in the same sun-baked village that was the birthplace of the late Hugo Chavez.

His father was a friend of the future Comandante growing up and Casanova says he wanted to enter politics from an early age to defend the poor.

"I always wanted to make this step but I never imagined it could be such a big one or happen so quickly," he said. "Winning Mister Venezuela allowed me to occupy a space that nobody of my political ideology could have won."

Getting elected won't be easy, however. Casanova is up against some 20 candidates, including Argenis Chavez, one of the late president's brothers.

Maduro has surrounded himself with celebrity candidates before, to mixed effect. In 2013 mayoral elections widely seen as plebiscite on his rule, former Major League Baseball all-star Magglio Ordonez prevailed in Puerto la Cruz. But pop star Antonio "El Potro" Alvarez lost a contest in the capital by a landslide despite a major media campaign.

The celebrity candidates this time around are lower-wattage stars. □

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presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 consecutive years. The honoree was Mr. Gil Urban from St. Joseph, Michigan. Gil is a loyal



member of the Marriott Surf Club and he loves Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the climate, beaches, restau-

rants, and being on Aruba and staying at the Surf Club is like being home for him and his family. The certificates were presented by

Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Ms. Jenny Boekhoudt representing the Marriott Surf Club. □



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**PALM BEACH** - Elegant Papillon Restaurant is planning a stunning evening at the Butterfly Farm. Surrounded by fluttering gossamer wings, guests will be treated to specialty Hendricks Gin cocktails and an amuse in

the garden before being led to their tables for a five-course extravagant dinner with superb wines. Tables will be set up throughout the Butterfly farm, so lovely, winged creatures will be forming a colorful back-

drop to the plates that are served. A kitchen will be set up, so that Papillon's chefs can whip up their delightful treats with all the seasonal specials on location. The Papillon dinner is held on July 4<sup>th</sup>.



Guests can expect the best of the best during the extraordinary evening, which is sponsored by the Aruba Trading Company (ATC). The fantastic twinkling lights that make everyone and everything sparkle in this botanical garden are courtesy of Patrick Verburg. Papillon's chefs and management have come up with the best possible pairing for the wines, which include a Veuve Cliquot 1995 Vintage Rose, Chablis Premier Cru, Super Tuscan and more. As there is space for only forty-five seated guests, pre-registration is necessary. And one of those forty-five will be the lucky winner of a magnum of Veuve Cliquot rosé. Who would not like to win one of those?

A bit of background information: Papillon, the name of the most famous escaped prisoner in the world, is also the French word for butterfly. The concept of hosting a 'Papillon' dinner in the butterfly garden is therefore a stroke of genius. Five years ago, the evening was a resounding success; guests still vividly remember the tremendous event. Please make your reservation early: you can do so via mail, website or in person. You will receive a numbered ticket, which might make you the evening's special winner. Reservations are preferred: [reservations@papillonaruba.com](mailto:reservations@papillonaruba.com). Or call: 586-5400. [www.papillonaruba.com](http://www.papillonaruba.com) □

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TripAdvisor - January 5th, 2015

Sidebar's signature burgers have been named The Sidebar, The Afterburner, The Goliath, The Texan, The Chaser, The Primal and The Italian Job and we are sure that everyone will be able to find a burger that calls out to them. The burgers come with brie cheese, prosciutto, Cheddar cheese, zucchini, sliced steak, Bourbon bbq sauce, dripping gravy and much more, depending on your order. The best thing is that these gourmet beauties cost less than \$ 15.--, so lunch or an evening out won't break the bank.

Feel love for Sidebar's burgers; they are bursting with taste— try them all and find your personal favorite. Come on down to Sidebar and rock your Wildest West with a fabulously tasty burger that packs a punch with its layers of flavor. And if you are not in a burger mood, then Sidebar has a wonderfully varied menu of all kinds of other options, ranging from vegetarian mushrooms and spinach to a zucchini cutlet to lovely salads, homemade soups, pastas and fish dishes.

Wash your lunch or dinner down with a premium, aged Bourbon or try the ice-cold beers on tap to slake your thirst. You can choose between Heineken, Balashi, Chill, Stella Artois, Miller Light or Presidente. Come inside, at the bar or sit outside on the terrace; at Sidebar there will always be a place for you.



Picture: "THE TEXAN" GOURMET BURGER

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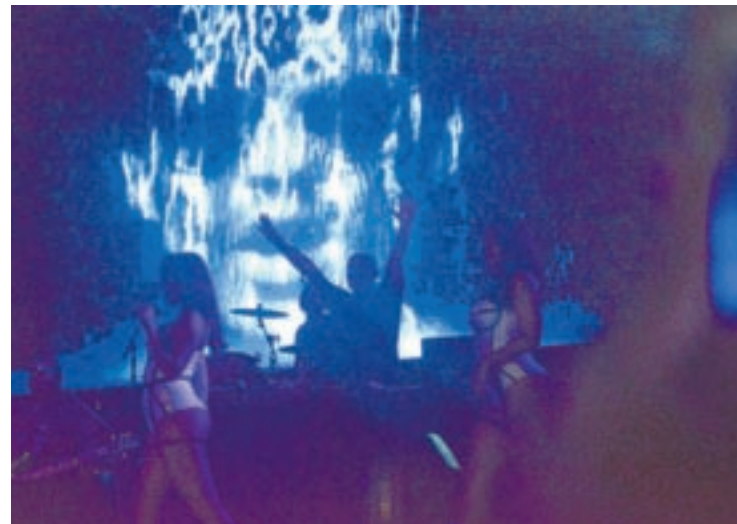
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and tropical breeze. What a great way to celebrate freedom! It's going to be an All-American celebration with decoration and party favors for everybody. The menu for the evening is Americana inspired with mini hamburgers, hotdogs and pizza. Also served will be national colored fruit skewers and dessert. For reservations, please call Red Sail Sports at 586-1603. You can also contact our friendly concierges in the lobby of your hotel for more information. Kids are welcome and pay less than half price of the regular fare, but please do not delay because space is limited. This fourth of July, enjoy the great outdoors while exploring one of the best stretches on the island. Grab a delicious bite to eat and raise a glass to Old Glory the tropical vacation way. ☐





# Aruba Summer Music Festival 2015 Heats Up The Island!



**ORANJESTAD**-Another international music festival held on the island over the weekend was a great success. Thousands of music fans from all over the world flew in to be a part of this multi-day music festival, at the Harbor Square Arena: the "Aruba Summer Music Festival". The place was completely sold out and even outside of the Arena people were enjoying the



in Puerto Rico Elvis Crespo, known especially for his great hits 'Pintame' and 'Suavemente'. This Entertainer took it a step further and left the stage to allow his fans in the VIP section to take "selfies" with him! Many Facebook and Twitter pages will be the witness



music till late in the night. Local bands and artists like Zion, DJ Gogo, N'Fuzion, Tsunami, Le Groove, D'Licious and Robert Jeandor and his Solo Banda Show filled the first night.

While the other two nights of mainly Latin music were filled with International Latin Grammy award winners who showcased a variety of music genres:

The famous Colombian singer-songwriter Carlos Vives, who currently is very popular around the world, because of his long list of hits, concert production and charms. The so called "Bebe de la Salsa" from Puerto Rico Jerry Rivera who has revolutionized the world of salsa in the 90's. His unmistakable way of interpreting salsa and his charismatic presence has made thousands of fans fall for him and he always 'shakes' the venues he performs at. And of course the meringue and bachata star also born



of that. The crowd went crazy! The last night of the festival started off with reggaeton artist Nicky Jam followed by Nutzbeatz who got the crowd moving while waiting for the arrival of the world famous Pitbull.

Mr Pitbull gave a two hour nonstop show as he kept on dancing, smiling and singing straight thru the night. What a show! His large band was amazing and the team of dancers was steaming sexy. Every single song of Pitbull was known by the crowd who was dancing and singing along. Pitbull and his entourage stole the show.

Aruba Congratulations with another international well organized concert. We are looking forward to the next one. □





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## Watson wins Travelers Championship on 2nd playoff hole

**PAT EATON-ROBB**

**AP Sports Writer**

**CROMWELL, Conn. (AP)**

— Bubba Watson made an 8-foot birdie putt on the second hole a play-off Sunday to outlast Paul Casey and win the Travelers Championship for the second time.

Casey overcame a three-stroke deficit with five to play, tying Watson at 16-under 264 in light rain at

TPC River Highlands.

But the 37-year-old Englishman, playing the tournament for the first time, lost his chance at the title while playing the par-4 18th for the third time when his third shot from a greenside bunker flew over the green and landed on the cart path.

Watson hit his 160-yard approach just to the right of the hole to set up his winning putt.

"I hung on, and that's what you have to do sometimes to win," Watson said.

Watson had a chance to win in regulation. But the two-time Masters champion bogeyed the 17th, while Casey closed with three birdies on the final five holes, sandwiched around a bogey on 15.

Casey watched in the scoring trailer with 9-month-old son Lex on his lap as Wat-



**Bubba Watson hits a tee shot during the Travelers Championship golf tournament, in Cromwell, Conn. Watson made an 8-foot birdie putt on the second hole a playoff Sunday to outlast Paul Casey and win the Travelers Championship for the second time. (AP Photo/Stew Milne)**

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son made a 3 1/2-foot par putt to force the playoff.

Watson finished with a 67, and Casey shot 65.

"There are always ifs and buts and could haves," Casey said. "But the goal was to give myself a chance to win, and I did that."

Watson has eight PGA Tour titles, also winning a playoff in the WGC-HSBC Champions in China in November at the start of the season. He won the Travelers in 2010 in a three-way playoff for his first win on the PGA Tour and is 5-1 in playoffs.

"It's just about staying calm," he said. "That's what you have to do, you just breathe and walk slower, take some deep breaths and focus on the fact that no matter what you still come in second place."

This was the sixth time since 2004 the tournament has been decided in a playoff. Brian Harman, who had a one-stroke lead after 54 holes, had a 69 to finish a stroke out of the playoff. After 39 straight holes without a bogey, he had back-to-back bogeys on Nos. 9 and 10 to fall two strokes behind Watson. His birdies on the final two holes

were not enough to catch Casey and Watson.

But the finish assured the 28-year-old from Georgia a spot in the British Open, along with Canadian Graham DeLaet, who finished two shots back, Carl Pettersson who finished fifth at 13 under, and Luke Donald, who tied for seventh at 11 under. Sixth-place finisher Zach Johnson already had an exemption into the field. "I've been thinking about that tournament for a long time and really trying to look at a way to get in there," Harman said. "This one burns a little bit, but that definitely helps the sting."

The Travelers was the first of three PGA Tour events where finishers not already exempt can get into St. Andrew's. There also are four spots available at The Greenbrier Classic and one at the John Deere Classic. Watson became the sixth multiple winner of this tournament, joining Billy Casper (1963, 1965, 1968, 1973), Arnold Palmer (1956, 1960), Paul Azinger (1987, 1989), Phil Mickelson (2001, 2002), Peter Jacobsen (1984, 2003) and Stewart Cink (1997, 2008). □

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## Jeff Maggert wins US Senior Open for 2nd senior major title



Jeff Maggert tees off on the third hole during the final round of the U.S. Senior Open golf tournament at Del Paso Country Club in Sacramento, Calif., Sunday, June 28, 2015.

(AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli)

### ANTONIO GONZALEZ

AP Sports Writer

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)

— Jeff Maggert is moving into an elite class on golf's senior circuit.

Maggert won the U.S. Se-

nior Open on Sunday for his second major victory on the Champions Tour this year. He closed with a 5-under 65 at sun-drenched Del Paso Country Club, edging defending champion

Colin Montgomerie by two strokes.

The victory makes Maggert more than just a repeat winner on the 50-and-over tour. Along with Montgomerie (three) and Bernhard Langer (three), the three have combined to win the

last eight majors.

"It's satisfying just because the guys out here on the Champions Tour are the same guys that I was trying to beat 20 years ago," Maggert said.

The 51-year-old American won his first senior major last

month in Alabama in the Regions Tradition. His only other Champions Tour victory came in Mississippi last year.

Maggert had just three wins in more than 20 years on the PGA Tour, the last in the 2006 St. Jude Classic. □

## Choi's fairway eagle leads to NW Arkansas Championship victory

### KURT VOIGT

AP Sports Writer

ROGERS, Ark. (AP)

— Na Yeon Choi eagled the par-4 16th hole from the fairway to take the lead and won the NW Arkansas Championship by two strokes Sunday for her ninth LPGA Tour title.

Choi closed with a 2-under 69 to finish at 15-under 198 at Pinnacle Country Club.

Choi's 8-iron from 142 yards on the 16th one-hopped into the hole to give her a one-shot lead over Stacy Lewis, the defending champion and local favorite. The South Korean player followed with another 8-iron to a foot on the par-3 17th, and closed with

a par.

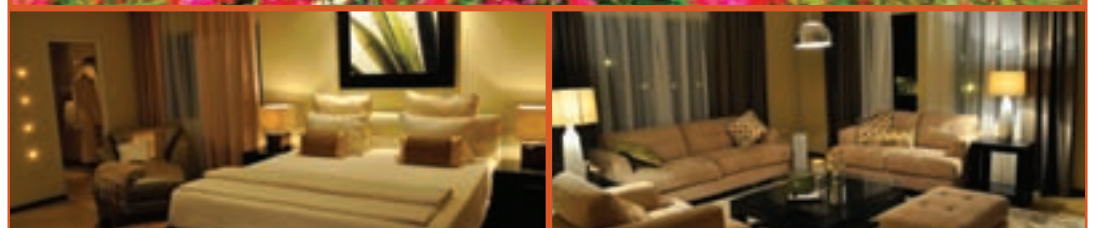
Choi also won the season-opening Coates Golf Championship in Florida.

Mika Miyazato finished second at 13 under after a 67.

Lewis bogeyed the par-5 18th for a 68 that left her tied for third with Azahara Munoz (66) and Anna Nordqvist (70) at 12 under.

Second-ranked Lydia Ko had a 63 to tie for sixth at 11 under.

While Choi struggled for much of her round, shooting a 1-over 37 on the front nine, Lewis — who began the day four behind — surged to the lead with her fourth birdie of the round on No. 10 to reach 13 under. □



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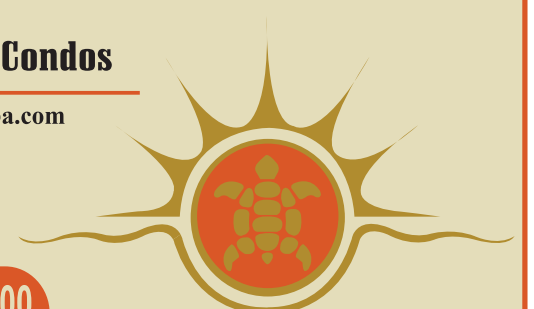
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## Kyle Busch grabs 1st win of season as comeback rolls on

JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

**SONOMA, Calif. (AP)** — After two practice sessions at Sonoma Raceway, Kyle Busch spent an evening icing his surgically repaired

left foot.

He repeated the routine the night before Sunday's race, all in an effort to minimize pain and give himself the best chance to pick up a much-needed victory.

Just five races after returning from a broken right leg and shattered left foot, Busch made his way to victory lane to continue what already has been an impressive comeback.



Kyle Busch sprays his crew after winning the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race Sunday, June 28, 2015, in Sonoma, Calif. (AP Photo/Eric Risberg)

He chased down Jimmie Johnson to win Sunday at Sonoma Raceway for his first NASCAR Sprint Cup Series victory in 35 races.

The next goal for Busch? Cracking the top 30 in points to earn a berth in the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship.

"Now I don't have to bust my butt and overdrive the car every week in order to get wins," Busch said. "Now I can just concentrate on running top-three, top-five, top-eight — just getting those finishes and points."

"If we can do that, the points have got to come and fall on the line."

Busch was injured when he crashed into a concrete wall during the Feb. 21 Xfinity Series race the day before the Daytona 500. He missed 11 races but recovered far faster than anyone expected and returned to racing late last month.

NASCAR granted him a waiver upon his return that made him Chase eligible should he qualify, and Sun-

day's victory is the first step.

But he still must rank inside the top-30 in points to make the Chase. He started Sunday's race ranked 39th in the standings, and the win moved him to 37th. He has 10 races left to crack the top 30 — he's 136 points out of 30th — and heads next week back to Daytona, where his season nearly ended before it began.

To crack the top 30, Busch has to average roughly a 14th-place finish in each of the next 10 races.

"Certainly it's feasible, this team is good enough," Busch said.

Kurt Busch finished second as the brothers notched their first 1-2 finish in Sprint Cup.

"I was trying to think if we've ever finished one two, and we did it today. That's a pretty special moment," Kurt Busch said. "I've got over 500 starts. I know he's over 300. Can you imagine, 800 starts between the two of us, we almost have 30 wins each, and that's the first time we've ever finished one-two?"

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## Gatlin wins 200 with fastest time ever at US championships

**PAT GRAHAM**  
AP Sports Writer

**EUGENE, Ore. (AP)** — Moments after crossing the finish line, Justin Gatlin turned

record 19.57 seconds Sunday. He dominated a race in which he had the lead coming off the turn. It was all over after that, given

Young was second, 0.36 seconds behind, and Wallace Spearmon third as he rounds back up to speed after sports hernia surgery.

who skipped the 200, set the previous meet record of 19.62 in 2007. And just so you know: Mi-

chael Johnson has the American record (19.32) and Usain Bolt the world record (19.19). □



Justin Gatlin, center, wins the 200-meter ahead of Isiah Young, left, and Wallace Spearmon at the U.S. Track and Field Championships in Eugene, Ore., Sunday, June 28, 2015. Young finished second and Spearmon took third.  
AP Photo/Don Ryan)

to his left and pointed at the clock to make sure everyone noticed what he just did.

Hard to miss that time. Somewhere, a certain Jamaican sprinter is no doubt hearing about it, too.

Gatlin breezed to the 200-meter title at the U.S. championships in a meet-

how he has been running lately and that his legs were feeling particularly fresh.

"I wanted to go out and make a statement and that's what I did today," Gatlin said. "That's probably one of the best races I've had."

Training partner Isiah

In the women's 200, Oregon standout Jenna Prandini won in 22.20. Candyce McGrone was second and Jeneba Tarmoh third.

Gatlin shattered his previous best of 19.68, which he set last July in Monaco and then matched last month here at Hayward Field. Tyson Gay, the 100 winner

## AP Source: LeBron James becomes free agent

**By J. KRAWCZYNSKI**  
Associated Press

For the third time in six seasons, LeBron James is an unrestricted free agent.

The difference this time is he has no plans to move again.

The Cleveland star will not exercise a \$21.6 million option on his contract for next season, a person with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press on Sunday. The person spoke on the

condition of anonymity because neither the Cavaliers nor James were publicly discussing the process.

James' decision has been widely expected for months. The approach allows him to sign a new maximum contract - likely another two-year deal with a player option for 2017-18 - that will pay him more than he would have made under his previous contract. His max number

for next season, which is tied to how high the salary cap rises, is expected to be more than \$22 million. The last time James became a free agent from Cleveland in 2010, he famously left his home state team to play for the Miami Heat. James won two championships and played in four NBA Finals in his four years in Miami before making the celebrated decision to return home last summer. □

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SUN & HOL 2:05 | 4:15 | 6:25 | 8:35

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## Argentina leads final 4 in Copa America semifinals

**RICARDO ZUNIGA**  
**Associated Press**

**SANTIAGO, Chile (AP)** — The Copa America semifinals are again missing a local favorite.

Argentina did its part, but Brazil — as in the World Cup a year ago, and in this same South American championship four years ago — no longer shines like it once did and is again out early in a major championship.

Paraguay knocked out the five-time World Cup winner Saturday 4-3 on penalties after a 1-1 draw. This was not as shocking as Germany's 7-1 humiliation of Brazil in the semifinals a year ago in Brazil's own World Cup, but it's a reminder that the country has lost some of its mystique and no longer plays the so-called "jogo bonito."

Paraguay is no stranger to this tournament. It was the losing finalist four years ago against Uruguay and could be headed to the finals again. It faces Argentina on Tuesday in one semifinal, and host Chile goes

against Peru on Monday in the other.

The final is July 4.

Not only is Argentina in the semifinals, but all four

is under pressure to finally deliver, the way he has for his club team Barcelona. Two-time World Cup champion Argentina has



**Argentina's Lionel Messi, right, is fouled by Colombia's Santiago Arias during a Copa America quarterfinal soccer match at the Sausalito Stadium in Vina del Mar, Chile.**

(AP Photo/Natacha Pisarenko)

teams are coached by Argentines: Jorge Sampaoli with Chile, Ricardo Gareca with Peru, Ramon Diaz with Paraguay and Gerardo Martino with Argentina. Here's a quick look at the last four.

### **PRESSURE ON MESSI**

Argentina star Lionel Messi

not won a major title in 22 years, and Messi is expected to change that. Messi and Argentina were knocked out of this tournament four years ago in the quarterfinals at home in Argentina, and lost the World Cup final 1-0 to Germany a year ago.

Messi must be tired. Barce-

lona won the Champions League title against Juventus in Berlin.

He then traveled halfway around the globe with the Copa America starting just five days later.

Messi has scored only one goal in the tournament, and Argentina has scored only four in four matches. It defeated Colombia 5-4 on penalties after a scoreless draw in the quarterfinals on Friday.

"It's terrible how hard it is for me to score for the national team," said Messi, who has 46 goals for Argentina, second to leader Gabriel Batistuta with 56.

### **PARAGUAY, TIED UP**

Paraguay reached the 2011 finals without winning a single match. It had three draws in group play, and two more in the quarterfinals and semifinals, where it won on penalties.

Paraguay finished last in 2014 World Cup qualifying from South America, but has rebounded under new coach Diaz, who was the most successful coach at Buenos Aires club River Plate before moving to Paraguay.

"We've played against Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil, and none could beat us," Diaz said.

Paraguay drew 2-2 with Argentina in group play, and 1-1 with Uruguay before ousting Brazil on Saturday.

### **CHILE HAS EXPECTATIONS**

Chile has never won the title, and this is supposed to

be the year with top players — called the "Golden Generation" — like midfielder Arturo Vidal of Juventus, forward Alexis Sanchez of Arsenal, and goalkeeper Claudio Bravo of Barcelona in its side.

Chile has been the best — and highest scoring team — in the tournament.

Chile will be without key defender Gonzalo Jara who was banned Sunday for three matches and will miss the rest of the tournament.

Jara was caught on camera poking Uruguay forward Edinson Cavani in the rear during Chile's 1-0 victory over defending champion Uruguay in the quarterfinals. Cavani reacted and was sent off. Chile, Venezuela and Ecuador are the only teams yet to win the South American championship.

### **PERU STILL THERE**

Peru is the surprise, and it also has a longstanding regional rivalry with Chile. Peru opened with a 2-1 loss to Brazil, but defeated Venezuela 1-0 and then reached the quarterfinals with a scoreless draw against Colombia.

Paolo Guerrero scored all three goals in Peru's 3-1 victory over Bolivia in the quarterfinals.

"We are showing that this team wants to keep going," Guerrero said. "We want to get better, and we hope this is the start of something." □



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## Audio overkill? Some question benefits of 'high-res' music

By RYAN NAKASHIMA  
AP Technology Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** -- Its backers say it does for music lovers what ultra high-definition television has done for couch potatoes. It's a digital format that packs nearly seven times the data found on CDs, touted as producing crystal-clear sounds with a sharpness that'll blow consumers away. Advocates like Neil Young and major record labels say the format that's the high end of what's known as "high-resolution" audio restores textures, nuances and tones that listeners sacrifice when opting for the convenience of music compressed into formats like MP3s or Apple's AAC.

But some recording-technology experts say this super high-res format - known by its 192 kHz, 24-bit technical specs - is pricy digital overkill, an oversized "bit bucket" that contains sounds only dogs or dolphins can truly enjoy.

Some cynics say the push to high-res audio is just another attempt to get consumers to rebuy music they already own.

Marc de Oliveira did just that in February when he bought Bob Dylan's latest album, "Shadows In The Night" from the Young-backed PonoMusic store. Already having bought the CD from a physical record

store, the Copenhagen-based 49-year-old IT consultant splurged on a 24-bit version, hoping to feel more present in the room where Dylan recorded. Instead, he stumbled on a

forever locking this particular release at the lower specs.

Still, that hasn't changed what Pono is charging for the file, \$17.99, versus the physical CD, which costs

nia-based studio. To be fair, they're labeled as such. And those files are still in a higher category than AAC files or MP3s, which eliminate some sounds in the compression process.

made to further assure consumers of the "provenance," or origins of recordings, and how they got to be labeled high-resolution.

"It's a real fact-finding job" and "it's going to take some time" to handle the thousands of albums in question, he said. Until then, it's a case of "buyer beware," he said.

And while audiophiles may be aware of the rarified, often hard-to-detect benefits of the high-resolution files, average music lovers can easily over-value the claims made by backers, according to Mark Waldrep, a recording engineer, college professor and writer of the "Real HD-Audio" blog.

That conclusion was reinforced when he analyzed high-res Warner Music releases of Joni Mitchell's "All I Want" from the 1971 album "Blue" and "Ain't No Way" from Aretha Franklin's 1968 album "Lady Soul," which The Associated Press bought from the PonoMusic store.

"You're buying a container that's really 50-60 or even 70 percent zeroes. It's all empty information," he said.

"The frequencies you're buying up here are either all zeroes, or hiss, which contributes nothing to the enjoyment of the music, unless you're into hiss." □



In this Jan. 7, 2015, file photo, Musician Neil Young speaks during a session at the International CES, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

blog that analyzed the file and found no more than 16 of the 24 bits were used, the same as on the CD. After months of de Oliveira trying to get a refund, Pono's Vice President of Content Acquisition Bruce Botnick replied to his posts saying that Dylan himself liked sample CDs cut in the studio. Engineers mastered the album from those discs,

\$9.70 on Amazon.

"They should have probably been more active about not accepting that as a real 24-bit file," de Oliveira said.

More than 90 percent of the PonoMusic store is represented essentially by digital copies, or rips, of CDs, Botnick acknowledged to The Associated Press in an interview at his Ojai, Califor-

But of the other albums on PonoMusic labeled higher-than-CD quality, Botnick says about 70 to 75 percent "we know are real," meaning they've researched the recording history to verify the file has more information than just a CD rip or has some other quirk in the original recording justifying a mixed or lower resolution. He said efforts are being

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# Here's why home sales are finally surging in America

**JOSH BOAK**

**ALEX VEIGA**

**AP Business Writers**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Real estate has gotten hot again.

source of growth. Buyers are more confident about their own prospects. But many also appear ready to close sales quickly because of concerns of being po-

that sales of existing homes climbed 5.1 percent last month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.35 million. May was the third consecutive month of the

but still lags behind the historical average of first-time buyers composing 40 percent of the market.

Several factors help to explain the surge.

First, employers have hired 3.1 million additional workers in the past year as the unemployment rate has slid to 5.5 percent from 6.3 percent. This influx of additional paychecks has led more Americans to feel financially secure after weathering the most severe downturn — sparked by a housing bust — since the 1930s.

"That's the big psychological shift between this year and last year," Richardson said.

Secondly, mortgage rates are affordably low but beginning to rise as the Federal Reserve prepares to a key interest rate for the first time in nearly a decade.

Average 30-year fixed rates were 4 percent last week, according to the mortgage giant Freddie Mac. That average has increased from a 52-week low of 3.59 percent.

Many buyers appear eager to finalize their purchases before rates and prices increase any further, said Jonathan Smoke, chief economist at Realtor.com. The result is that more homes are selling at a faster clip. A stunning 28 percent of homes are selling within two weeks, compared to 19 percent before the recession, according to a recent survey by the brokerage Coldwell Banker. Rising home prices have added an extra sense of urgency among homebuyers like Logan Reynolds, who

works in advertising in San Angelo, Texas.

When a three-bedroom, two-bath house hit the market for \$110,000 several weeks ago, Reynolds was first out of the gate to make an offer, ultimately closing the deal for \$112,000, just \$3,000 under his spending limit.

"We wanted to buy before it got too expensive where we could get what we wanted for the price we could afford," said Reynolds, 23.

Lastly, the rising prices mean that more homeowners are starting to regain the equity lost in their homes during the downturn. The number of mortgage holders owing more on their loans than their homes are worth has tumbled 19 percent in the past year to 5.1 million — or 10.2 percent of all mortgaged properties, according to real estate analytics firm CoreLogic.

Overall supplies still remain tight. But because more mortgage holders are recovering equity, more of them can afford to sell their home and use the proceeds to buy a new home, creating greater demand.

"The housing market is unique in that the sellers are also the majority of the buyers," said Mark Fleming, chief economist at First American, a title insurance and real estate services firm.

Many economists caution that the sales gains of recent months could be short-lived if prices increase so sharply buyers are priced out of the market. □



**Robert Almirall, director of marketing and special assets coordinator for Mederos & Associates Real Estate Inc., puts up a sign in front of a home in the Shenandoah neighborhood of Miami. More Americans bought homes in May, the National Association of Realtors reported last week, a sign of economic strength that is pushing up average prices.**

(AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee, File)

Home sales are on pace for their best year since 2007. First-time buyers are streaming back into the market. Prices are skyrocketing, aided by a stronger job market and tantalizingly low mortgage rates that are creating pressure for buyers to act fast.

The resurgence is a sign that the U.S. economy — after muddling through a sluggish, six-year recovery — has re-discovered another

tentially priced out of the market by rising mortgage rates and home values.

"What we've seen is that demand is off the charts in 2015 — and that is really boosting sales," said Nela Richardson, chief economist at the brokerage Redfin. "Last year, buyers were dipping their toes in their water. Now, they're diving in."

The National Association of Realtors said Monday

sales rate exceeding 5 million homes.

Yet listings have failed to match the greater demand, fueling large price gains. Median home prices climbed 7.9 percent over the past 12 months to \$228,700, about \$1,700 shy of the July 2006 peak.

About 32 percent of the homes sold last month went to first-timers, compared to 27 percent a year ago. The improvement is substantial

## Report: Ultra-low interest rates could become entrenched

**DAVID McHUGH**

**AP Business Writer**

**FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)**

— Near-zero interest rates could become chronic in the world's major economies unless "a firm hand" is used to raise them back to more normal levels.

That is the message in the annual report issued Sunday from the Bank for International Settlements based in Basel, Switzerland. The BIS, which functions as a forum for global cen-

tral banks, argues that low rates aimed at stimulating economic growth in the short term may actually do the opposite over longer periods.

It said cheap money encourages more debt and creates financial booms and busts that leave lasting scars on the economy — with the result that central banks apply more cheap money to try to lift the economy.

"Rather than just reflect-

ing the current weakness, low rates may in part have contributed to it by fueling costly financial booms and busts," the BIS report said.

"The result is too much debt, too little growth and excessively low interest rates. In short, low rates begot lower rates."

Major central banks have kept low benchmark rates in place to stimulate the economy after the shock delivered by the global financial crisis of 2007-2009.

The idea is that low rates make it easier for people to borrow, spend and invest. The Fed's benchmark rate is a range between 0 and 0.25 percent; the ECB's 0.05 percent; the Bank of England's 0.50 percent, and the Bank of Japan's 0.10 percent.

Low rates have driven down mortgage rates, enabling homeowners to re-finance, and they have helped boost stocks. But they have wiped out years

of income for savers — and put pressure on insurance companies and pension funds.

The Fed is looking at whether to finally raise rates, but has held off because inflation remains low and growth in the United States still uncertain. Many economists think an initial hike may come in September. The Fed cautions that it will only raise rates slowly.

The BIS report didn't mention individual countries. □



## China makes 4th cut in interest rate to boost economy

**BEIJING (AP)** — China's central bank announced Saturday the fourth round of interest cuts in seven months and lower deposit-reserve ratios for some banks to lend to small and rural businesses, as Beijing tries to shore up the country's sluggish economy. The announcement for the world's second-largest

economy also followed a nearly 20 percent drop in China's stock market over the past two weeks. The People's Bank of China said it would cut the rate on a one-year loan by commercial banks by 0.25 percentage point to 4.85 percent. The interest rate paid on a one-year deposit would be lowered by 0.25

point to 2 percent. Rates were cut on Nov. 22, March 1 and then May 11. The new rates take effect Sunday. The central bank also said it would lower the deposit-reserve ratios by 50 points for some banks that are lending to small businesses and agriculture-related businesses, a move that

would ease lending for the private sector by cutting the amount of reserves the banks are required to hold. "The cuts will support the adjustment of economic structure, support the real economy, and lower financing costs," said Yao Yudong, director for the People's Bank Finance Research Institute, in an inter-

view by the state broadcaster China Central Television. "The prudent monetary policy remains unchanged," Yao said. The state-owned banking industry lends mostly to state companies, so the new measure is expected to inject more credit into rural and small businesses. □

## APNewsBreak: Deed would keep Trump Plaza shut for 10 years

**WAYNE PARRY**  
**Associated Press**

**ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey**

**(AP)** — The owners of Atlantic City's former Trump Plaza casino plan to keep it shut for at least 10 years as a tax-saving measure. Trump Entertainment Resorts has filed a deed restriction for the casino, which closed last September, preventing it from being used again as a casino for at least a decade. It could still be used for another purpose.

The move was done to avoid potentially higher taxes under a bill New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie could sign soon allowing casinos to make payments in lieu of taxes for 15 years as part of an Atlantic City rescue plan. The bill applies to any property that was licensed to operate as a casino in 2014 and that does not have a deed restriction. Trump Plaza operated for eight and a half months during 2014, and the company feared it might be included in the alternative tax program.

"The Plaza could be required to make mandatory

payments under the PILOT program notwithstanding the fact that it generates no revenue and its hotel rooms are closed," the company wrote Friday in its filing with a Delaware bankruptcy court in which the existence of the deed restriction was revealed. "The PILOT program applies to casino gaming properties that are 'not subject to recorded covenants prohibiting casino gaming.'" Trump Entertainment filed the deed Friday with Atlantic County officials. Trump Plaza closed on Sept. 16, 2014, the last of four Atlantic City casinos to go out of business that year.

The company already has appealed its 2014 and 2015 property taxes, and believes it can get a better deal through that appeal than if it were forced to participate in the PILOT program. Once the PILOT plan is enacted, assuming Christie signs it into law, casinos would be prohibited from appealing their property taxes.

The deed restriction would apply to anyone who might buy the property over the



**This 2012 photo shows the Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino and Caesars Atlantic City Hotel and Casino, left back, in Atlantic City, N.J. The owners of Atlantic City's former Trump Plaza casino plan to keep it shut for at least 10 years as a tax-saving measure.**

**(AP Photo/Mel Evans)**

next 10 years; it could be canceled if a buyer is willing to pay Trump Entertainment an unspecified "release fee" to cancel the restriction. Company CEO Robert Griffin would not say Sunday what the price would be to cancel the deed.

Billionaire investor Carl Icahn, who is in the process of buying Trump Entertainment out of bankruptcy court, approves of the

deed restriction, according to the filing.

Whether anyone would even want to buy Trump Plaza for a purpose other than knocking it down remains unclear. Trump Entertainment tried for years to sell the property while it was still a casino. A February 2013 deal to sell it to a California company for \$20 million — what would have been the lowest price ever for a currently operating

casino — fell through within a few months.

Several casino executives and analysts have said the property would be more valuable if the casino were razed to make way for the possible expansion of The Walk, Atlantic City's outlet shopping district, or for some similar non-gambling purpose. Trump Entertainment wants a bankruptcy judge to approve the restriction on July 9. □

## Former Qualcomm executive sent to prison for insider trading

**SAN DIEGO (AP)** — A former Qualcomm Inc. executive was sentenced this weekend to 18 months in prison and fined \$500,000 for an insider trading scheme to profit off the wireless technology company's confidential information and then covering up his crimes. Jing Wang, 52, the former global business operations president, pleaded guilty in July to charges of insider

trading, money laundering and obstruction of justice in the case that ended in convictions for several Qualcomm employees.

"Jing Wang was a powerful insider at one of the world's top corporations, but he threw it all away to make a few hundred thousand dollars," said U.S. Attorney Laura Duffy. "While Wang has lost his power, his position and his freedom, the

real losers here are investors who play by the rules, and our nation's financial system, which is diminished with every one of these schemes." Wang made three trades based on insider information, starting when he bought \$277,000 in Qualcomm stock before the company announced a dividend increase and stock repurchase.

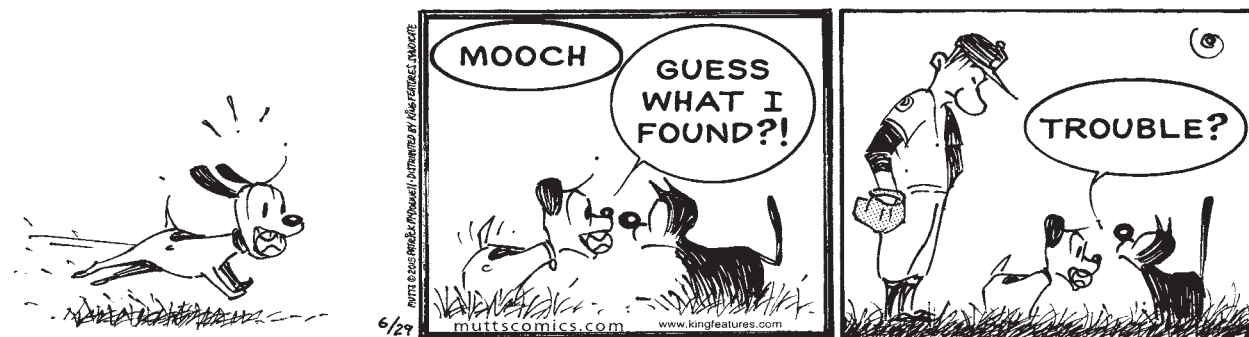
In December 2010, he

purchased stock in Atheros Communications Inc. after Qualcomm's board of directors approved a non-public offer to buy the developer of semiconductors for wireless communication, but before news of the pending \$3.1 billion acquisition was reported. Weeks later, Wang sold the Atheros stock for approximately \$481,000 and purchased Qualcomm stock

a day before the company announced record earnings, prosecutors said. Wang and his stockbroker tried to blame the trades on Wang's brother, who lives in China. The brother is wanted on an international warrant for his role in the scheme. The stockbroker and three other former Qualcomm executives have either pleaded guilty or settled civil allegations.



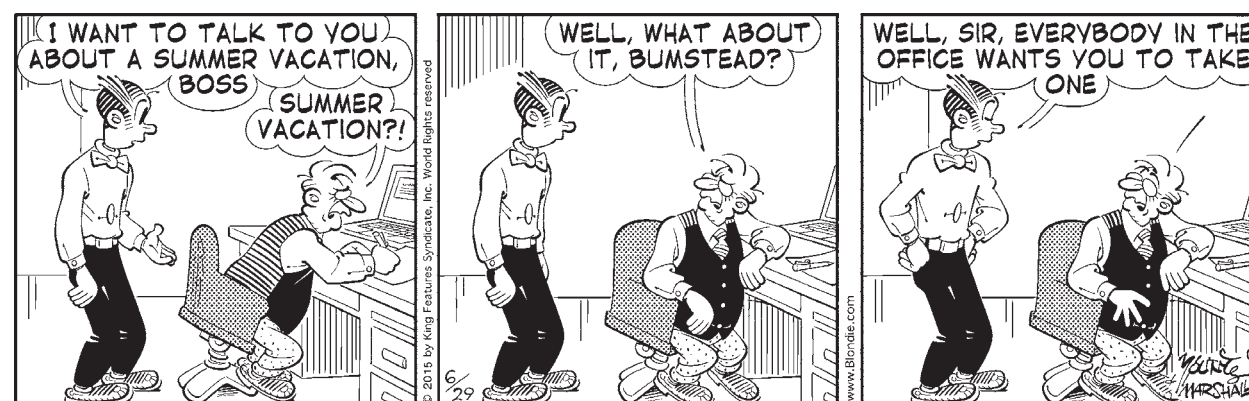
## Mutts



## 6 Chix



## Blondie



## Mother Goose & Grimm



## Baby Blues



## Zits



## Conceptis Sudoku

8		1	3		9	
		2			4	8
	3		2	8	7	
3	4		9	7		2
		6	5			
7	9		2	1		6
	8		9	7	1	
5	3			8		
	7		5	2		3

Difficulty Level ★

6/29

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer

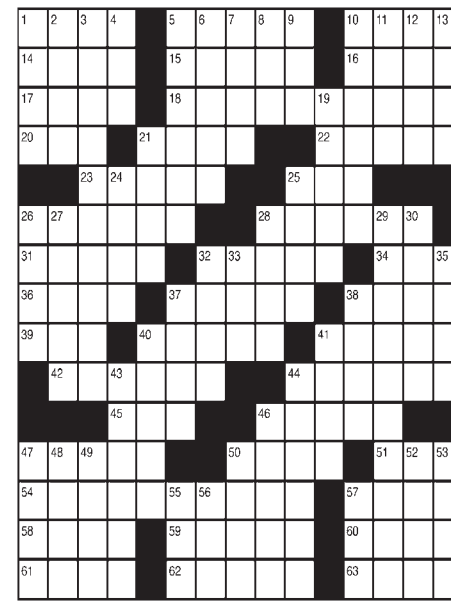
1	6	7	2	4	8	9	5	3
9	3	4	1	5	6	2	8	7
5	8	2	9	7	3	6	1	4
8	1	3	5	6	9	4	7	2
7	2	6	3	8	4	5	9	1
4	9	5	7	2	1	8	3	6
3	4	9	8	1	2	7	6	5
6	7	1	4	9	5	3	2	8
2	5	8	6	3	7	1	4	9

## ACROSS

- Pickle variety
- Lance
- Prepare spuds
- Midwest state
- Singer Judd
- "... bigger and better things!"
- Decays
- Decorative
- Rented abode, often: abbr.
- Departs
- Hush money
- Jumps
- Pigeon's cry
- Large scissors
- Truthful
- Singer Como
- Full of lather
- ... off; give a heads-up to
- Numbered golf club
- Chewy candy
- Go out with
- ABC competitor
- Move slightly
- Limber; flexible
- Rollerbladed
- More swamped with work
- Pistol
- Manly
- Frequently
- Muscle quality
- One addressed as "Sister"
- Southern estate in Civil War days
- First, second, third or home
- Take care of
- Waterbirds
- Make tea
- Long tale
- Said no more
- Abnormal sac

## DOWN

- Explorer of TV cartoons
- Pancake-lover's café
- Capital of Arkansas
- ... Angeles, CA
- Is nosy
- Removes apple skins
- Long periods
- "I ... Rock"; Simon & Garfunkel hit
- Curved edge
- President James ...
- One opposed
- Pierce
- Gap; opening
- Blackish wood
- Sinise or Busey
- Make a salary
- Duplicate
- Rotate
- Basil & thyme
- Ax handle
- Not moving
- Support the parish
- Uttered
- Not accurate
- One's equal
- "That was ...; this is now"



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

6/29/15

## Saturday's Puzzle Solved

HAY	BABES	DASH
ICED	EMOTE	ONTO
SEAR	ABATE	ONES
SHELTERED	MOPE	
SOUR	LIE	
PUTSUP	SHINDIGS	
ERRED	FLANK	NOT
ABES	CLANG	CAME
CAA	PRANK	RENEW
ENDURING	DINERS	
ROB	WEST	
STAB	BILATERAL	
PAPA	ABOVE	AVID
OXEN	GENES	LEND
TIDE	EXERT	SEE

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6/29/15

- Plate
- Hinder the growth of
- Author Clare Boothe ...
- Chairperson's meeting outline
- Prohibited
- Antlered animal
- ... for; selects
- Small insect
- Orangey drink
- In a draw
- ... up; spends
- Mr. Gingrich
- Years lived
- Two and eight
- UK TV network





From the left, high school students Mollykate Rodenbush, Brittany Tainsh, and Michaela Arguin, hold a letter from former Boston crime boss James "Whitey" Bulger as they pose for a photo in Lakeville, Mass.

(David L Ryan/The Boston Globe via AP)

## Whitey Bulger writes teens letter: "My life was wasted"

**BOSTON (AP)** — Former Boston crime boss James "Whitey" Bulger had some advice for three Massachusetts high school girls who wrote to him for a history project: Crime doesn't pay. The 85-year-old sent the handwritten letter, dated Feb. 24, from federal prison in Florida where he is serving two life sentences, The Boston Globe reported Sunday.

"My life was wasted and spent foolishly, brought shame and suffering on my parents and siblings and will end soon," Bulger wrote.

He went on to write: "Advice is a cheap commodity some seek it from me about crime — I know only one thing for sure — If you want to make crime pay — 'Go to Law School.'"

Bulger, a former FBI informant whose case brought scrutiny to the agency, was convicted in 2013 on racketeering charges that included playing a role in 11 murders. He spent 16 years as one of the nation's most wanted fugitives before he was captured in California in 2011. His lawyers are appealing his conviction before the federal appeals court in Boston next month. Three 17-year-old students at Apponequet Regional High School in Lakeville chose him for their National History Day competition entry on leadership and legacy.

One of the students, Brittany Tainsh, said she was stunned to get his letter.

"It wasn't what we were expecting at all," she said. "He did not really reply to any of our actual questions. He was very apologetic." □

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30	311	\$5,000
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27	103	\$4,000
29	134	\$4,500
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27	341	\$4,000

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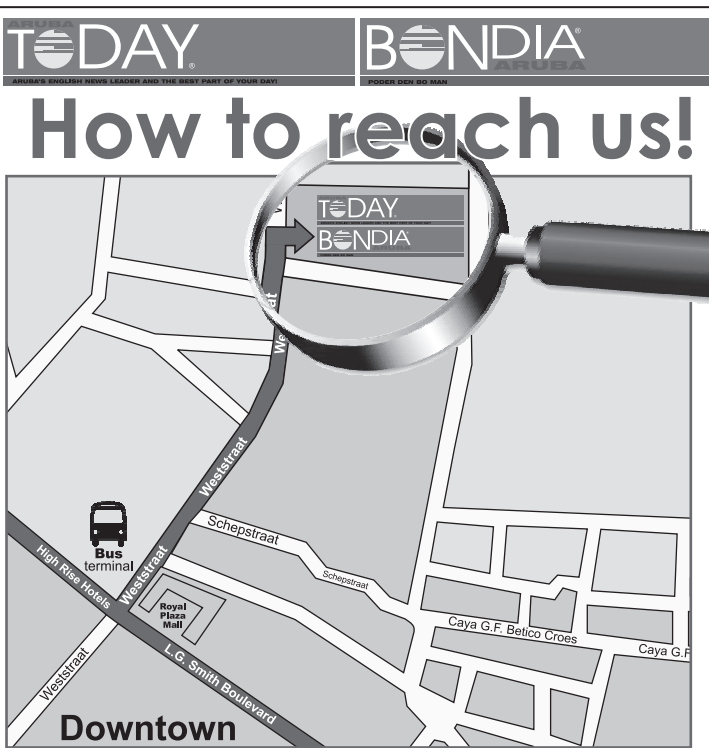
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## New questions about why more women than men have Alzheimer's

**LAURAN NEERGAARD**

**AP Medical Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Nearly two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's disease are women, and now some scientists are questioning the long-held assumption

Alzheimer's-related gene has a bigger impact on women than men.

"There are enough biological questions pointing to increased risk in women that we need to delve into that and find out why," said

about it," she added.

A recent Alzheimer's Association report estimates that at age 65, women have about a 1 in 6 chance of developing Alzheimer's during the rest of their lives, compared with a 1 in 11

stitutes of Health this year. But, she said, "on average, women live four or five years longer than men, and we know that Alzheimer's is a disease that starts 20 years before the diagnosis." That's how early cellular damage can quietly begin.

Brinton researches if menopause can be a tipping point that leaves certain women vulnerable.

However it starts brewing, there's some evidence that once Alzheimer's is diagnosed, women may worsen faster; scans show more rapid shrinkage of certain brain areas.

But gene research offers the most startling evidence of a sex difference.

Stanford University researchers analyzed records of more than 8,000 people for a form of a gene named ApoE-4, long known to increase Alzheimer's risk.

Women who carry a copy of that gene variant were about twice as likely to eventually develop Alzheimer's as women without the gene, while men's risk was only slightly increased, Stanford's Dr. Michael Greicius reported last year.

It's not clear why. It may be in how the gene interacts with estrogen, Brinton said. Amy Shives, 57, of Spokane, Washington state, recalls when her mother began showing symptoms of Alzheimer's. But it wasn't until after her own diagnosis a

few years ago that Shives looked up the gender statistics.

"That was alarming," said Shives, who is in the early stages of Alzheimer's, which struck at a younger-than-usual age and forced her retirement as a college counselor. "The impact on our lives and that of our families is extraordinary."

She points to another disproportionate burden: About 60 percent of caregivers for Alzheimer's patients are women.

"My daughters are in their 20s and I'm already ill," Shives worries. "It's very stressful for them to think about when their mother's going to need their help."

What drives the difference in Alzheimer's cases isn't clear, said Dr. Susan Resnick of the National Institutes of Health, pointing to conflicting research.

"We really have had a tough time understanding whether or not women really are more affected by the disease, or it's just that they live longer," Resnick said. Data from the long-running Framingham, Massachusetts, health study suggests that because more men die from heart disease in middle age, those who survive past 65 may have healthier hearts that in turn provide some brain protection. Many of the same factors — obesity, high cholesterol, diabetes — that damage arteries also are Alzheimer's risks. □



**Amy Shives speaks about her experience with Alzheimer's disease, which she was diagnosed with in 2011, at her house in Spokane, Wash. Nearly two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's disease are women, and now some scientists are questioning the long-held assumption that it's just because women tend to live longer than men.** (AP Photo/Young Kwak)

that it's just because they tend to live longer than men.

What else may put woman at extra risk? Could it be genetics? Biological differences in how women age? Maybe even lifestyle factors?

Finding out might affect treatments or preventive care.

One worrisome hint is that research shows a notorious

Maria Carrillo, chief science officer for the Alzheimer's Association.

Last month, the association brought 15 leading scientists together to ask what's known about women's risk. Later this summer, Carrillo said it plans to begin funding research to address some of the gaps.

"There is a lot that is not understood and not known. It's time we did something

chance for men.

The tricky part is determining how much of the disparity is due to women's longevity or other factors.

"It is true that age is the greatest risk factor for developing Alzheimer's disease," said University of Southern California professor Roberta Diaz Brinton, who presented data on gender differences at a meeting of the National In-

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# Grateful Dead enthrall faithful in first of 5 final shows

LISA LEFF

Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, California

(AP) — The songs still ran long. To the uninitiated, the communal rituals of the faithful fans probably looked strange. Was it trippy? Well, this was a Grateful Dead show, after all, the first in a handful over the next week that are said to be the last.

The four surviving members of the Dead, joined by a trio of well-versed companions, launched their "Fare Thee Well" mini-tour on Saturday night in Northern California, where the legendary jam band got its start 50 years ago and almost two decades after the death of beloved lead guitarist Jerry Garcia.

During a performance that featured a little more than 3 ½ hours of music, the group's so-called "core four" — rhythm guitarist Bob Weir, bassist Phil Lesh and percussionists Mickey



Ambiance at Grateful Dead Fare Thee Well Show at Levi's Stadium on Saturday, June 27, 2015, in Santa Clara, Calif. (Photo by Jay Blakesberg/AP Images)

Hart and Bill Kreutzmann — unreeled a set list featuring both crowd-pleasers and more obscure pieces from their early catalog.

The band got the Levi's Stadium crowd of about 80,000 into its custom-

ary loose-limbed groove at the start with familiar renditions of "Truckin'" and "Uncle John's Band." From there, the rest of the first set veered unevenly through "Cumberland Blues," "Born Cross-Eyed"

and a 20-minute-long "Viola Lee Blues" that gave Phish front man Trey Anastasio, who had the honor and pressure of serving as Garcia's surrogate on guitar, his first challenge on a solo.

As "Viola Lee" was ending, a rainbow arced across the sky above the stadium like a smile from beyond.

The vast majority of the audience, which included former flower children with more than a touch of gray in their hair as well as millennials who were babies when Garcia died — were inclined to appreciate every chord, so grateful were they just to be there.

"I'm in the right place at the right time and all the right people are here with me and it's all perfect," said Sabrina Donahue, 47, a meditation teacher from Montana who attended the show with her "best hippie soul sister" — a veteran of over 300 Dead shows in the late 1980s who now works as a school district superintendent in California.

"The only difference is we're keeping our shoes on now," the educator, Michelle Hutchins, 47, said. □



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## Box Office: 'Ted 2' lags behind 'Jurassic World,' 'Inside Out'



In this image released by Universal Pictures, the character Ted, voiced by Seth MacFarlane, appears in a scene from "Ted 2." (Universal Pictures via AP)

**LINDSEY BAHR**  
AP Film Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — A foul-mouthed Teddy bear is no match for a pack of dinosaurs. Seth MacFarlane's "Ted 2" opened far under expectations with \$32.9 million, according to Rentrak estimates Sunday, ceding the top two spots to holdovers "Jurassic World" and "Inside Out."

While \$32.9 million is a sol-

id opening for an R-rated comedy, bigger things were expected from "Ted 2," which cost a reported \$68 million to produce. The Universal Pictures sequel was expected to earn somewhere in the \$50 million range going into its debut weekend, thanks to the record-setting precedent of the first film, which earned \$54.4 million in 2012.

In addition to mediocre

reviews, perhaps the initial intrigue around a raunchy stuffed animal has worn off a bit.

"It's hard to maintain that hyper level of excitement once people have seen the talking Teddy bear," Rentrak's Senior Media Analyst Paul Dergarabedian said. "In comedy, it's about inventiveness, newness and the shock value of something original."

Universal's domestic dis-

tribution head, Nick Carpou, said that the positive response from exit polls indicates a promising life for the movie in the weeks ahead.

"We could have had a higher gross, but we get the gross we get. It was a very competitive marketplace this weekend," said Carpou, who noted that the first film's gross was a massive surprise to the studio.

"Jurassic World," also a Universal film, narrowly held the top spot for the third weekend in a row with a mighty \$54.2 million, pushing it past the \$500 million mark domestically — only the fifth film to do so in history.

Carpou said the film's record-setting performance has exceeded his high expectations every step of the way. He's excited that it seems that audiences are returning for repeat viewings.

Disney and Pixar's "Inside Out," meanwhile, finished at a close No. 2, earning \$52.1 million — only a 42 percent drop from its first weekend in theaters.

Dergarabedian marveled at the consistency of "Jurassic World" and "Inside Out."

"These are no flash-in-the-pan movies. Both are delivering exactly what audiences want," he said.

"Max," the other new opener, brought in a modest but expected \$12.2 million to finish fourth. Warner Bros. is distributing the PG-rated MGM movie about a PTSD-afflicted military dog who goes to live with his handler's family.

The film, which cost under \$20 million to produce, is performing especially well in the South, the Southeast and the Midwest, according to Warner Bros.' domestic distribution EVP Jeff Goldstein. □

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